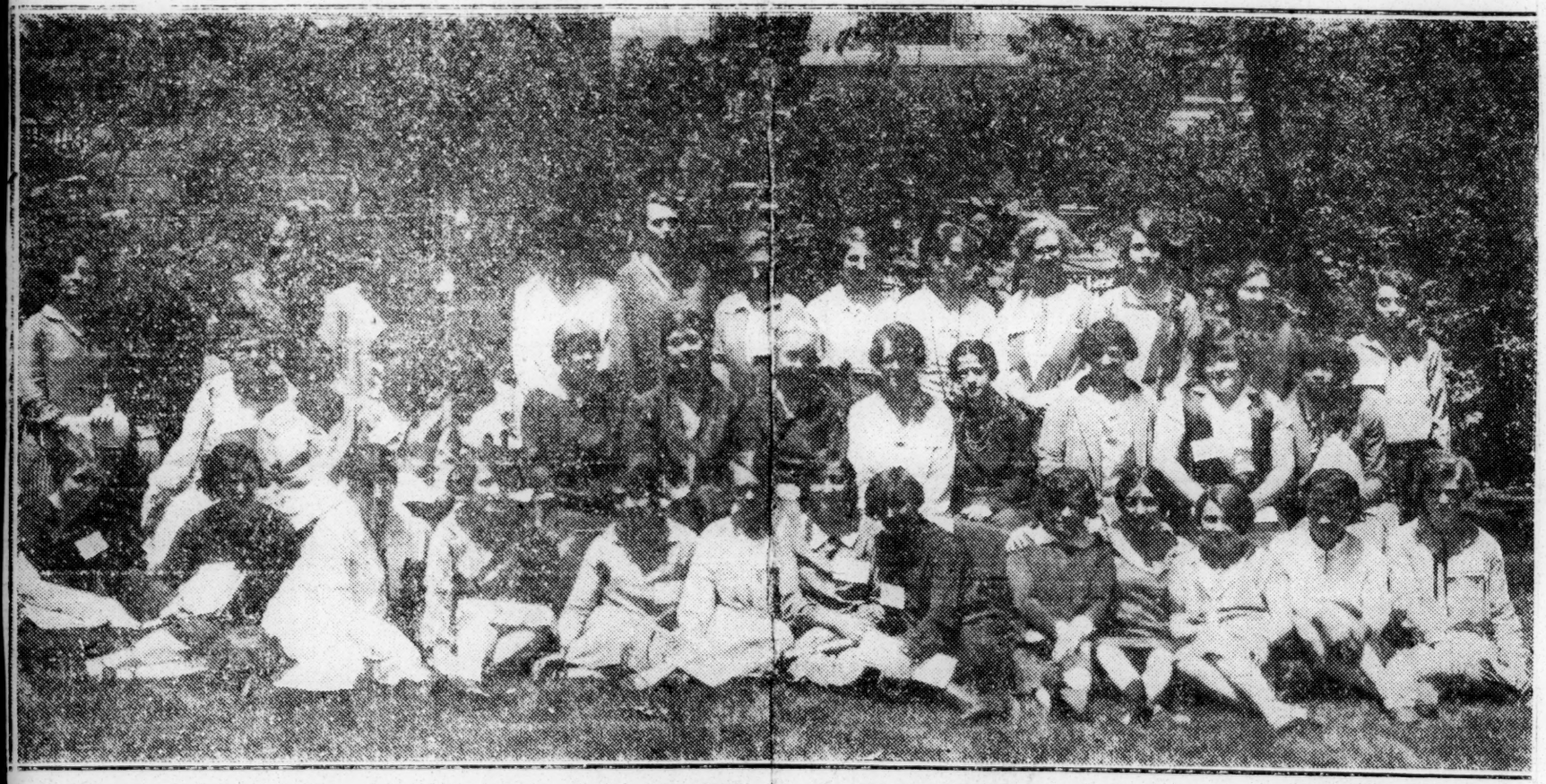
Education – 1927
Vocational

Group of Pupils and Teachers, Photographed Out-of-Doors



The student body of the Barnard summer school for women workers in industry between classes in the quadrangle of Milbank and Fiske Halls at Barnard College. Four faculty members, including Miss Ernestine Friedman, supervisor of the school, are in the group. Miss Friedman is the eighth from the left on the second row from the top

Smith-Hughes Workers Hold P. V. Conference

Prairie View, Texas.—A conference looking to the improvement of Smith-Hughes work in the colored schools of Texas, was held recently at the college, Prof. G. O. Saunders, teacher-trainer of Smith-Hughes work, presiding. Prof. E. L. Williams, professor of vocational work, A. and M. College, and L. W. Fox, director of vocational work, SanAntonio, addressed the teachers, explaining the object of Smith-Hughes and vocational work in general. Mr. Fox declared that there was something wrong with those who think that education prepares one to escape work. "We all have to work," he said, "and it is better to work at some skilled trade at a good salary than to work at a white-collar job that will hardly enable you to live. There is no dishonor in work and it is better to train for the kind of work you can get the most out of." 8-6-27

Prof W. R. Banks, principal of the college, after speaking of the demand for capable men and women to fill various industrial positions, said: "I am determined to see that Prairie View College lives up to its opportunities in this type of work. The trouble is with the teacher. The teacher must impress his students with the dignity and importance of labor, for the student is but a carbon copy of the teacher."

Others who addressed the meeting along industrial lines wer Prof. J. J. Abernethy, director of mechanic arts and teachers engaged in Smith-Hughes work in the common schools.

N. Y.
HERALD TRIBUNE
AUG 14 1927

Women Workers Study Labor and Economic Problems in Barnard Summer Classes

Experiment Is Success as First Group Is Graduated; Practical Subjects, Science, English Are Taught to Folk Who Commute to College

By Rachel Dunaway

Workers' education has scored again! For the first time in the fascinating history of labor education the students of an intensive study group have lived at home and gone back and forth to classes. At Barnard College on Friday night, when the first session of the Barnard Summer School for Women Workers in Industry closed, the experiment was completed with a simple, impressive commencement ceremony. Barnard, in opening its doors to the industrial group, is the fourth and latest of the colleges to join the ranks of those going in for this type of adult education.

Not stenography, not handicrafts—not any short-cut to money-making persuaded these industrial girls to give up their jobs for seven weeks of continual study. In the solemn classrooms of Milbank and Barnard Halls, girls from dressmaking and millinery establishments, hotel dining rooms and upholstery houses earnestly discussed economic problems or listened to lectures about the ways of a seedling making its way into the light or the courses of the stars. Economics, English, General Science was the curriculum that brought them to Barnard. After study from 9 in the morning until 9 or 10 o'clock at night, they jumped the subway, surface-car, ferry or bus and made for their hall bedrooms or family hearthsides in places as far away, in some cases, as Brooklyn and Staten Island.

The remarkable thing about this new experiment in industrial summer schools is that it has proved a shining success, in spite of the difficulties the students faced in traveling long distances before and after classes and in the impracticability of home study as beautiful as college girls from wealthy families may have are provided, and every condition is set so that study may be made easy and natural. It was with misgivings that the promoters of Barnard Summer School for Women Workers in Industry went into a project where the girls would have to commute before and after classes.

As a matter of fact, the working out of the scheme has shown that it takes the girls a shorter time to settle down to study when they live at home than when they are housed in dormitories Miss Ernestine Friedmann, supervisor of the Barnard Summer School for Women Workers in Industry, believes this is because students have only one adjustment to make, that of renewed study after years of absence from school, whereas those at Bryn Mawr have the additional one of a new living environment to become accustomed to before they can really get down to school work.

Neither will the Barnard group have such a sharp let-down—physical and psychical—as faces the students in residence when the schol is over. Their families and they have become used to the idea and practice of home study so that continuation will be far easier than for those who have been studying under special conditions.

The enrollment of this first Barnard session stood at twenty-seven. The average age of the student body was twenty-four. Thirteen of the total number were Russian and six were Polish, while the nationality record of the others shows them to come from England, Scotland, Czechosolvakia and Germany. Two Negro girls were among the regular students. Only four of the total enrollment were native born. Language difficulties were staggering for most of them, but under the careful guidance of Miss Esther Swenson, the teacher of English, they made notable progress. Their vocabularies were broadened to the utmost capacity, and pronunciation was corrected with remarkable tact and precision.

Tradition at Bryn Mawr

Bryn Mawr summer school for working girls has become a tradition. Cultural courses for the daughters of the working classes are not a new thing under the sun, but there, as at Sweet Briar and Wisconsin, living quarters

Worker Answers Question

Pragmatic-minded observers immediately ask, "What good is the study of economics going to do them beyond making them more class conscious—more union devoted? And as for studying Shakespeare and a smattering of physics and botany and chemistry, what earthly good will it do a girl who is planning to go back to a sewing machine or a pressing iron?" One of the girls, a garment worker, answered with directness.

"I want to help the girls back in my factory if I can. Through the union perhaps; maybe I will do organization work, but I doubt it. I want to understand the reasons for the union so that I can explain them to any girl who is not as sure as I am of what it can do for us. Then, of course all of us intend to do a lot of reading after we leave here. This is just a beginning in helping us to understand the world better—to be less vague about everything in our thinking."

When the girl said that, she was waiting for 9 o'clock, the hour set for the class, to climb the observatory tower on the Columbia campus, for a glimpse of the stars through a great telescope. Better understanding, indeed! They possess that rare quality—genuine intellectual curiosity.

The other night, when I walked into the English class it was deep in Act I, Scene 4, of "King Henry the Fourth." Line by line they went over it—not with the college classroom intent of dragging comma and participle from its natural habitat and out into a cold, uncharitable world, but for the human interest the poet put into the play. Colloquialisms and Elizabethan quips were explained with such clarity that Falstaff's rolling bulk almost stood in the Barnard classroom cracking jokes with the sprightly young English prince. The class was enjoying it thoroughly, relaxing after having very nearly wept over the heartbreaking tragedy of King Lear the week before. Listed among their readings were Carl Sandburg and other moderns.

While I sat at dinner with them we discussed the garment makers' unions. A pretty Italian girl of about eighteen, who spoke perfect English, said, no, she didn't belong to a union, because she had always had a good job and pleasant working conditions. Then there were those long strikes, she said, when the girls had to go out just because the chairlady saw something she didn't like, and as for those union dues, why, that would be just awful, she thought.

A Russian girl across the table, who had sat quietly through most of the dinner, turned on her almost fiercely. "Good working conditions! Yes, of course you have them—but why? Because the union sees to it that the shops provide them. Your wages are good—because the union workers in your shops force the employers to give them. You accept all those benefits without giving a thing in return. We of the union go out on strike for weeks, yes months, and pay out of our good wages on union dues so that our people may have protection—and you get all the good of it, without giving a thing to deserve it."

"Oh, but I have been in open shops," protested the Italian girl mildly, "where the chairlady would see some little thing she didn't like . . .

Employees From Various New York Shops Seek Knowledge of Industrial Theories "to Help Girls Back in Factory" to Better Selves

she'd be blowing her whistle every five minutes, and all the union girls would have to stand up." Sarah Cohen had never been in a shop, had never heard of one where the chairlady blew her whistle every five minutes."

Miss Friedmann, in addition to her duties as supervisor of the school, taught courses in economics. Beginners in the subject were given a brief survey of the social sciences, including sociology, economics and psychology. Simple textbooks such as James Harvey Robinson's "Mind in the Making" and Dewey's "How to Think" introduced the students to this new thought world. By such study Miss Friedmann firmly believes the girls will be able to think straighter, less liable to jump to hasty or wrong conclusions when they get back at their jobs and may be embroiled in practical labor problems.

All Types Taught

To the impractical idealist she hoped to show that human nature and institutions founded upon it cannot be uprooted and rebuilt in a day—and why this is true. To the hopeless, fatalistic student, should she have such a one, the concept of social evolution, with the industrial worker at its very heart, has much to offer.

Students who have had work in economics before have gone ahead to more advanced study. Their topics for research and discussion included "Unemployment," "Whither the Labor Movement," "Industrial Democracy" and the "Separation of Ownership-Management and Labor." The first-hand familiarity of these industrial girls with the actual processes of industry explains the ease with which they read the economics prescribed for college juniors. Miss Friedmann declares that her students can read through a chapter of Tawney's "Acquisitive Society" or the Webbs's "Industrial Democracy" and pick out the meat without difficulty. The long paragraphs of explanation that must be made to the academic student are everyday matters for industrial workers.

Sheets Two Miles Thick

The thickness of the ice in these sheets is estimated to have been 10,000 feet, nearly two miles, in Northern Canada, and 4,000 feet in the Northern part of the United States. At its terminus, it probably dwindled to less than 1,000 feet.

Such a living, moving mountain, if it occurred again, would overwhelm our civilization wherever it passed over. It would utterly destroy and crush a great city like Chicago or New York, if either lay in its path. This has led geologists to wonder if North America again faces an ice age. The glacial periods in the past seemed to have come at almost regular intervals, as nearly as the records of the rocks they deposited can be read. Scientists see no reason why this cycle should discontinue now.

The advance of a new glacier, slow but relentless, could not be stopped by any act of man. Although its movement would be only a few feet a year, the egg shells under a steam roller, requiring thousands of years to cover the continent, it would force all before it. Far worse would be its effects than any invasion of Teutonic hosts or barbaric troops. Nothing would survive.

ing how groggy I used to
heir weight sinks below the level of
he water, and they float off into the
Northern Atlantic shipping lanes.

The course of the ice advance is easy to map out. It left along its trail many deposits of rock, carried long distances. At places the terrific power of the invading force bored out valleys which are known to-day as glaciated valleys. Many of these valleys are found in the northern part of the United States.

The Kansas glacier reached its southernmost point of advance in the east in the region of Manhattan Island and Central Pennsylvania. This glacier, springing from the Labrador center, did not have the compelling force behind it of the West Hudson Bay mass, which went 100 miles farther toward the equatorial regions.